The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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CONTENTS

What Price, Uncle Sam? 273
Week by Week 274
The Calles Eclipse ..... E. R. Pineda 277
Blue-penciling the Editors ..... Richard Reid 279
Might I Suggest, Mr. President? ..... James F. Cunningham 282
Reaper (*verse*) ..... Olga Marx 284
Seven Days' Survey 285
Communications 288
Books ..... Mary Stack, William L. Engels, Catherine Radziwill 289

Previous issues of THE COMMONWEAL are indexed in the *Readers' Guide* and the *Catholic Periodical Index*

WHAT PRICE, UNCLE SAM?

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S insistence that heavier taxes be levied on the incomes and legacies of very rich men raises many questions of grave importance. One has been stressed excellently by Walter Lippmann: does this new approach to the problem of raising governmental income remedy a defect in our methods of taxation, or does it aggravate already existing evils? Mr. Lippmann notes well the unsoundness of the present income tax. Originally designed as a means for bringing hidden levies out into the open—for taking a recognizable sum out of every man's earnings instead of slyly appending a tax to the cost of rents and commodities—it has now become an affair of the relatively few, while the masses, gouged through sales and nuisance levies, no longer even realize the cost of government to themselves. The assumption that confiscation of a few excessively large incomes and fortunes would alter the general picture in any important way seems to Mr. Lippmann unjustified; and we agree with him. In essence this new move by the administration is a purely political maneuver, serving no useful purpose excepting that it does placate those who resent the existence of great wealth in a land where poverty is rampant.

But it seems to us that a still more serious issue of public policy is involved. As a result of unfavorable economic conditions, millions have grown conscious of grave industrial difficulties the nature of which was either not suspected by them in 1928, or was ignored. But of course those difficulties were really there all the while, hidden like rocks under the high tide of prosperity and sure to reemerge in time. The present attitude of public opinion is therefore the result of a developed awareness of some economic and social realities, at least. While few know what to do in the emergency which has beset the na-

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tional ship, all of us realize that the emergency exists, and it is expedient that commands should be given and relief work organized. This ship has at least temporarily grounded, and some kind of intelligent "planning" to get it afloat again is imperatively necessary.

Of course it may be wise to think at the same time about how those dangerous hidden rocks can be avoided in the future. Charts can be drawn of the terrain, and surveyors can explore a route of comparative safety. Still, wisdom would seem to demand that the most important thing under the circumstances is to get out of the immediate danger. One may believe, to be sure, that the ship is such a total wreck that salvage is impossible anyhow, and that the sole possible way out is a completely new vessel. One may be convinced that the kind of capitalist economy which has functioned in the United States belongs in the graveyard of dead systems, and that an "experimental collectivism" must take its place. All this is plausible enough. Still, it would be rather a grave mistake to blow up a craft that might still do nicely for a while just for the fun of building a new one about which everybody knows little.

The Roosevelt administration, which faced the emergency with vigor and dispatch, has sometimes been at the mercy of both fear and extreme desire. It never showed this more clearly than during the present tax debate. As proposed, the new taxes are not a well-reasoned and systematized method for distributing exorbitant accumulations of wealth. They are only a sop to those who think that the income of the average family can be tripled or better by taking from the rich to give to the poor. Offering such a plan under such circumstances means pinning a medal on the chests of the poorest social and industrial navigators of whom our country has knowledge. It must now seem to millions of stranded mortals that there was something in Huey Long, after all, and that Mr. Roosevelt is a belated convert to the truth.

We believe that the nation as a whole is sincere in its desire for as equitable a social order as can be established in the United States. But who is to guarantee that this desire may not be intensified into rampant hallucination? America has from this point of view no enviable record. The people went into a war to save democracy believing fairy-tales about the enemy worse than all that the chronicles of savagery record, and attributing virtues to allies which the heavenly hosts themselves do not possess. A temperance movement of genuine worth petered out eventually in the fatuous fanaticism of the Eighteenth Amendment, just as half a century previous the ardor of the crusade against slavery had to be cooled by blood. It is therefore imperative at present to believe in social reconstruction and social justice, but it is even more important to have faith in reason. For the society which loses *that* in an emergency is lost. What has happened elsewhere throughout the world is warning enough; for if the same things occur here, they will be worse by far.

Economic life is no fool's paradise. It is an ocean beset with perils as vast as life and death. To ignore these and to assume that through the magic of central authority the comfort and prosperity of every citizen can be guaranteed is to forget the hunger that bites fiercely in Moscow and the whip that cracks down hard in the great land engineered by Dr. Schacht. As a nation we cannot only be better off, but we can also be worse off, than we are now. Our well-being must depend, in the final analysis, upon how we deal with realities and not upon how we pipe-dream.

The liquidation of wealth which serves no useful purpose is demanded by the moral conscience as well as by social expediency. All of us know that some large fortunes are self-liquidating—that they are possessed by men and women who realize the meaning of stewardship. The predatory, for their part, have no reason for being in an orderly society. True enough—and yet? Is it more difficult to control the greed and selfishness of inordinately rich men, or to curb the excesses of a too powerful political rule? Is it easier to deal lucidly and calmly with the few, or to control the instincts of the many? In short, are we conscious of the real problem at all when we concentrate on finding a scapegoat rather than on the moral and economic virility of the average citizen?

These are aspects of the serious issue which Mr. Roosevelt has brought to the fore. We hope that he, whose opportunity for leadership is so singularly large, will not fail to defend the truth that neither government, nor society, nor business, can succeed unless all citizens everywhere see that progress is not fortuitous but earned through their own vigilance and sacrifice.

Week by Week

The Trend of Events

CONGRESS apparently settled down to several weeks of hot weather and bitter wrangling. The inability of Mr. Roosevelt to drive his party forward in a straight line through the cluttered jungles of new legislation was demonstrated primarily by the independence of House and Senate legislative committees. Both the banking bill and the utilities bill were so much changed as a result of pressure on the people's representatives that important compromises on both seemed inevitable. It was, however, the new anti-wealth taxes which occasioned the greatest furore. Evidently the

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President and his spokesmen failed to understand one another; and the result was that now famous effort to speed the new tax measures through Congress as addenda to "nuisance tax" legislation. When Mr. Roosevelt repudiated this haste and in addition all but committed himself to definite schedules which were considerably less than too drastic, the challenge of irresponsible Senator Long was shouted far and wide over the housetops of Washington. Democracy is unquestionably in a tight spot, for the merely political point of view, but it still has so much elbow-room on all sides that the present friction and pressure are by no means of decisive importance. The real issue is the alternative to NRA. What can the government devise to take the place of this epochal plan to revamp the national economic life? An answer must be found if the campaign against unemployment and kindred ills is to make impressive headway.

Il Duce in the Spotlight

THE MEANING of the news from abroad is that British diplomacy has met with serious obstacles in the effort to avert a European war. France bitterly resents the separate naval treaty with Germany, and the various explanations given by London have helped only to strengthen Fascist sentiment in Paris. That the Croix de Feu and kindred organizations have acquired vastly more popular support during the past few weeks is an obvious fact, attributable in large measure to the concessions which Hitler so oddly obtained from the English. Even less attractive is the failure to arrive at any definite conclusion about Abyssinia. Here the attitude of American public opinion is governed almost entirely by sentiment, which favors an independent African kingdom against the expansionist ambitions of Mussolini. But England is hardly in a position to enjoy such a bath of noble idealism. The war, which showered it with a dozen new colonies, was fought with the help of Italy, which had been promised plenty of new colonial territory as a reward for battling the wicked Austrians. But victory brought with it a great deal of forgetfulness. London and Paris joined in frowning upon all Italian territorial lusts. Slices of Austrian territory, even Fiume, were not important; but Africa—well, who wanted an important change there? The French drove valiantly through Morocco. Demonstrably the British had designs of their own on Abyssinia, which they flattered with an invitation to join the League of Nations. It is therefore not surprising that Mussolini should be stubborn about the matter, or oblivious about the fact that he ought to stay home and guarantee the independence of Austria. We wish Sir Anthony Eden no hard luck, but really a bit of snubbing in the Eternal City would not be too harsh as a form of retaliation to the way his government has been acting lately. It could prevent a new European war rather easily, one thinks. If the League, with British cooperation, offered to restore German colonies in return for important political and military concessions, the vigorous repercussions would make more noise than Hitler, Mussolini and Stanley Baldwin put together.

Chiappe Draws Blood

WHEN English sports writers joked with Jean Borotra about the challenge to a duel he received from a French journalist, he told them that in his country a duel is not a particularly funny joke. A few days later Jean Chiappe fought on the elegant lawn of Mme. Coty, widow of the perfumer and the publisher of the rabidly nationalistic *Figaro,* and shot his opponent in the thigh. This duel symbolized perfectly the reasons why the recrudescence of dueling in France is by no means a joke. The Corsican, Chiappe, has followed the new French political tactics, a politics of leagues —disciplined organizations which express the will of their leaders not only at the ballot box but constantly in the streets—to such an extreme that he is known as the "clan" politician. During the ten years he ruled the police of the Seine district he built a personal following, armed by the State, which winked at immense illegality, including the Stavisky affair and the formation of the various Right "patriotic" leagues which operate like small Nazi parties and which on February 6, 1934, were responsible for the overturn of the Parliamentary Cabinet. He was recently elected to the Paris City Council (defeating a candidate with a unique endorsement by an imposing list of Catholic intellectuals), and soon afterward was made President of the Paris City Council. He is the spearpoint of the nationalists and the ardent, uncritical haters of the Left.

THE IMMORAL revival of dueling is a personal phase of the whole reversion to non-democratic personal force as an instrument of politics and political economy. It brings into play a warrior ethics as a protest against the anonymous spirit of mass economics and politics. It is something Thorstein Veblen predicted twenty-five years ago in pages which seemed almost fantasy. It is associated with the paganism of the Niebelungs rather than to any Christian conception of chivalry. And the excellent Friends of *Esprit,* the dominantly Catholic group which opposed Chiappe in Paris, are unfortunately not the leaders in the fight against the forces he symbolizes. On the last day of June, the Popular Front against Fascism proclaimed the unity of forty-eight groups against the "seditious leagues,"

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and this united front was formed by the Communists and Socialists and now has brought into line the powerful Daladier majority of the Radical-Socialists. It is Marxist in tone, and many French Marxists are campaigning within their parties for the arming of the proletariat, for the formation of the "Red Guard," the "Workers' Militia." Against the duel as a means of settling affairs of whatever is chosen to be honor, they can hardly be expected to wage a theoretic or moral campaign. The un-Christian Right and the un-Christian Left maintain solidly their right to resort to any methods in order to exterminate each other.

Literature in the Mass

PUBLISHING an anthology of prose selections from all literatures of the world might well seem a task from which Atlas himself would recoil. But Carl Van Doren was nothing daunted, and the fairly surprising thing is that his huge book is not at all bad. Naturally, despite a few Saint Augustine, Cardinal Newman and the Bible, it reflects the special intellectual ideals of the author, which are not ours. It would be discourteous to insist too strongly on that fact. But we are tempted to wonder just how distorted would be the impression of a foreign literature gained solely by reading Mr. Van Doren's anthology. In French he would come within a mile of doing fairly well. There would be glimpses of the moralist tradition, of fictional art from Stendhal to Proust, and of emancipated criticism. He would miss half the good sights, and he would come away with an imperfect knowledge of the place as a whole, but he would have seen something. Of Germany he would have just an inkling; of Spain his would be a warped impression. Nevertheless the wonder of wonders is that people do form opinions from such books as this—and maintain them stoutly ever after. It is, perhaps, not the anthologist's fault that they do so. Yet, alas. . . .

Rosary College Experiments

CAN PEOPLE be induced to take intelligent advantage of the new leisure? The president and faculty of Rosary College say "Yes" and have the facts to support their optimistic conviction. A year ago it was decided to open the doors of this beautiful institution (one of the best structures Mr. Cram ever designed) to the people of River Forest and its environs. Thereupon the Sisters advertised free evening courses, for which no credit would be given, and sat down rather sceptically to await results. It was, indeed, no mere act of faith. If an audience showed up, teachers already sufficiently burdened would have to hold forth for another hour. The results were most gratifying. Students to the number of 560 appeared and registered. A typical and serious difficulty was that many people refused to believe there were no strings attached—that this was neither a public collection nor a revival meeting. But gradually people caught on, and followed the courses in divers things, from English poetry to the New Deal, with cooperative enthusiasm. "To one of the meetings," says Sister Thomas Aquinas's report, "came a man and his wife bringing their dinner guests." The year's record is so impressive that the point automatically suggests itself: Why should a college stop work with the young people who are privileged to acquire formal training? Why not go out into the highways and byways, to corral that part of adult America which believes that the shores of the land of contentment can be sighted only from the ship of the mind? Once more Rosary College, which has much else to its credit, deserves a medal for having blazed a trail.

Of Heroism

IT IS a matter for common pride and thankfulness that heroism is at least as plentiful among the sons of men as cowardice. It is like beauty or luck or genius, in that it follows no social pattern and plays no favorites. An awkward buck private may turn out to have it under fire instead of his débonair lieutenant whose family traditions are all military. A society mother may exhibit toward her child a sustained, superhuman selflessness which confounds the convention that this particular virtue grows only on lowly soil. A meek little storekeeper fells a brace of armed burglars. A vivacious, exuberant girl joins a nursing order and sails for the leper islands. And in this company—commonplace in the glorious sense that we know and recognize them all—assuredly belongs a sixty-year-old convict now on the point of release from a Texas prison. Nine years ago this man, otherwise evidently as unremarkable and obscure as the great mass of unsung humanity, confessed to a murder which he knew his wife had committed. His sentence was ninety-nine years. The wife's belated confession and suicide, releasing him after this interval, cannot in the circumstances be viewed as anything but a further tragedy for him. Yet for the rest of humanity, reading, it brings to light another of those immortal choices of the will which make the human drama, high and low, so full of grandeur and deathless promise. Following the story, brief and bald in the news reports, and yet absolutely complete, since no qualifying detail could add to or take away from its meaning, one feels the double exaltation that true heroism brings: honor for the hero, and the sense that he has honored and enlarged us.

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THE CALLES ECLIPSE

By E. R. PINEDA

Recent developments have greatly changed the outlook in Mexico. The surprising upset of General Calles is an event of major importance, most of all because it was not a consequence of a revolutionary military campaign. Mr. Pineda attempts in the following paper to diagnose the situation; and we believe that what he writes will be found interesting and impressive. "Mexico," he says—and he himself is a Mexican—"is actually emerging from personal rule" into institutionalized democracy.—The Editors.

ON THE occasion of a recent interview with Senator Padilla at his country residence in Cuernavaca, Calles deplored the attempts of certain elements to divide the House of Representatives into Callistas and Cardenistas. He recalled that a similar situation had resulted in the retirement of Ortiz Rubio from the presidency and, referring to the numerous recent strikes, he stated such disturbances of economic progress in a country that protects the workingman, as Mexico does, were "not only ingratitude but treason." This was said for the benefit of President Cárdenas.

The remarks of the "First Chief of the Revolution," although at the time he held no official position of any kind, were accorded considerable prominence in all the press except, strangely enough, in the *Nacional Revolucionario,* organ of the National Revolutionary party, and it was expected history would repeat itself, but it did not.

The labor unions saw in Calles's remarks a challenge and took it up as such. Twelve of the most powerful labor organizations in the country threatened a general strike as their answer to his alleged anti-labor statements. Railway, trolley, mining and electric employees joined the workmen's and peasants' group in censuring the former executive for condemning what he characterized as the Marathon of Radicalism—the numerous labor troubles since President Cárdenas took office six months ago. The following day the President stated his government would "energetically insist on full compliance with the labor laws, without regard for the alarm of representatives of capitalist interests." His whole Cabinet resigned, apparently to give the President a free hand in choosing a ministry in accord with his policies, and, at this writing, General Saturnino Cedillo, one of the strongest military chieftains in Mexico and known to disapprove of the anti-Catholic policies of the government, has been given a post in the new Cabinet. Calles, on the other hand, bowed to the powers that be and left for his ranch in northern Mexico, presumably to be nearer the American border and safety.

What does it all mean? Has Calles really been eclipsed? How is it that the Iron Man of the Revolution lost power as suddenly as the forty-year-old President gained it? Here are some questions the recent crisis has raised and partly answered, for the upset has come to solve several puzzles.

Frankly, I must admit that I was rather in a quandary myself. I was reasonably certain that Calles pulled the wires, all the wires, and yet I was stumped by the apparent radical trend of some elements in the Cárdenas administration. Nor was it quite clear to me how it was possible for the newly elected President to begin with such a thorough house-cleaning, when it was an open secret that the rubbish was dear to Calles; for the gambling dens the young President began to close were controlled, we all suspected, if not by Calles, by a little clique close to him.

The roots of the ministerial crisis lie deep in the Mexican Revolution and it is only with reference to the whole movement that recent events must be explained.

Even before 1910, when the Revolution broke out, there was a growing movement in Mexico, as in Spanish America in general, away from personal rule. Latin America was growing tired of its absolute president-dictators. With the growth of industrialism, with the development of economic life, with closer communications with the outside world, we had begun to aspire for a government of institutions. In the Mexican revolutionary Constitution, and in other Latin-American organic laws, one can easily discern this tendency evidenced by various provisions against reelection as a means of discouraging the perpetuation of a president in power.

Coupled perhaps with this general tendency for institutional life there has been another aspiration, a growing desire for independent education, free from political control. In various Latin-American countries the government merely votes appropriations for educational expenses, while the Department of Education or the National University administers these grants as they see fit. In Mexico the university finally obtained home rule some six years ago and the students, who struck and rioted for their rights, have been jealously guarding their hard-won conquests. Throughout Latin America, it should be explained, students are the finest demonstrators and revolutionists. They have the fire of youth, without the experience of old age, which in Spanish

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America is always bitter, while their lack of worldly goods does not keep their hearts where their treasures are.

Last year, when General Calles urged in blunt terms the enactment of socialist education, that is, the end of academic freedom, the students of all political persuasions resented bitterly the First Chief's speech, so much so, that the wary politicians, when translating into constitutional provisions the General's advice, decided to exempt the university from the application of the program of socialist education. The university was already an impregnable fort against the Revolution, but Calles did not realize this fact, nor did he see the far-reaching effects of his appeal for socialist education. The fact is, the Iron Man had been thinking in terms of the philosophy of force only, a philosophy that throughout the course of Mexican history has been really the basis of political theory, but was already evolving.

In Spanish America, because of our individualistic nature and lack of herding instinct, we do not form associations. A group attaches themselves either to the Church or to the State, the two great organizations, very much as little bubbles in a glass of water become attached to the big bubbles. In Mexico, however, the Church and the State having been disorganized by revolution, the people have been forced to form their own groupings. The number of associations that have developed in Mexico since the Revolution first broke out in 1910 is enormous as compared with the associations we had before that time.

Undoubtedly, the General did not quite perceive this phenomenon, nor did he sense its possible significance. Indeed, the first Chief of the Revolution hitherto has shown myopic vision. What, then, has been the real source of his strength, if indeed he ever had any strength? Was it labor? Was it the army? The General was never a workman nor quite a soldier either. From military men I have again and again heard nothing but disparaging comments on the strategy of the great chief, and yet I must admit that within recent years his influence in the army has been such that officers would go to him for confirmation of orders issued by the War Office.

Doubtless Calles has exercised a truly magic spell over the army. During the Revolution in Mexico, a curious, superstitious philosophy of success has grown. When there is actual fighting in the field, the first thing a commander tries to do is to instill in his men a superstitious belief in his unfailing success. This, then, was one of the sources of Calles's power. He was successful because we thought he was successful.

But perhaps the real source of his strength is something that is democratic rather than revolutionary, something that Americans would readily understand. General Calles came into power as a dark horse. He was General Obregón's dark horse, picked out for his dark-horse qualities. Obregón had to render lip service to the growing movement against reelection, and hence it was necessary for him to find a successor who, because of his unpopularity with the various elements of Mexican politics, would not be likely to succeed himself. Obregón's creature was left to do very much as he wished. He was given plenty of rope and he took it.

Calles's bluntness and tactlessness soon raised various hornets' nests about him. He became the bitter foe of capital, he goaded the Catholics to revolt. His rabid nationalism precipitated a deadlock with the United States that in other times doubtless would have culminated in war. With the advent of Mr. Morrow, Calles learned two lessons: first, that diplomacy is the language of statesmanship and, secondly, that a country economically dependent on the United States, as Mexico is, would do well to take its cue from American politics. The General, by this time very wealthy, grew conservative, that is, he grew away from the revolution, which, thanks to leaders such as he was at first, had taken a decidedly radical stamp.

Obregón's death made the political dark horse master of the situation. He was in power. He had the whip hand, I mean almost literally, for I have been reliably informed that in order to crush the Obregonistas, he had at least one leader summoned to the War Office and horsewhipped for his attempts to keep the old Obregón gang together. In power now, he thought best to bow like his former master to the principle of non-reelection. Possibly the resistance of the Catholics and his failing health induced him also to step out of the picture as much as he could. But can a Spanish-American dictator really step out of a picture any more than an American gang leader? A Latin-American dictator's rule is purely personal. In office he violates his own principles, he practises exactly what he preaches against, he incurs the enmity of countless elements, he amasses great wealth. Losing power for him is losing his all, his riches, his friends, his life. Often the gang he has surrounded himself with will not let him resign because of the instinct of self-preservation.

Calles, then, created his own dark horse—Ortiz Rubio. He had been abroad some eight years in the diplomatic service before the election in 1929. He had no following in the army and the fact that he was a gentleman, unlike most revolutionists, tended to discredit him further with the gang. I was connected with the opposition in this campaign and I had an opportunity to study closely what was going on behind the political scenes. Our candidates were intimidated, jailed, beaten up, killed. The voters' rolls were

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posted in a strange way, the list for the Bronx, let us say, being posted in Brooklyn, and vice versa. In some six states there were no ballots for the opposition. Not that the opposition could not vote. It could—for the government candidates only.

In fairness, however, Ortiz Rubio took his duties seriously. He tried a little house-cleaning. He surrounded himself with some of his relatives, who doubtless were a great improvement on the old gang. And the House of Representatives, because of our characteristic lack of herding instinct, began to split into Callistas and Ortiz Rubistas. The situation became alarming. The President-maker spoke and the President resigned and went into exile, to make way for the duly elected President whom the Mexican people voted into power by the greatest plurality of ballots (not votes) recorded in the history of the country!

Calles was now supreme but he had undermined his own strength while gaining power. He had created the National Revolutionary party, which he controlled, but he had irrevocably alienated labor, with its increasing strength, the Catholics, the students. He clung to the outmoded philosophy of force and personal rule.

Again and again, doubtless for effect, possibly also because of fear, General Calles had told us that the country had passed from personal rule into institutional life. Was it really so? Some of us wondered. Did the General actually believe what he said? No, he was repeating something which he did not believe. His threat to Cárdenas clearly proved this point. For the First Chief of the Revolution, belying his public utterances, acted on the principle that there was still personal rule, that he was the rule. And he found, to his dismay, that Mexico is actually emerging from personal rule into something like institutional life.

The Cabinet crisis, therefore, is significant, far-reaching, transcendental. It is really a revolutionary event, revolutionary as effecting a revolution in the course of Mexican revolutions. It marks a sublimation of Mexican revolutionary methods. It has purified the political atmosphere and got rid forever of Anti-Christ. But excellent as it is as a step in the right direction, Catholics should not expect too much for it, not at least in the immediate future.

BLUE-PENCILING THE EDITORS

By RICHARD REID

THOUSANDS of Catholics are complaining about the secular press, and the communications departments of Catholic magazines and newspapers are liberally sprinkled with letters lamenting Catholic indifference to the problem. This underrating of ourselves is but a variation of the Catholic practise of the Christian virtue of humility. In numerous places in the United States Catholic-Action-minded individuals and organizations have been working with the secular press. Specifically, the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia has been so engaged for a period of upward of nineteen years, with heartening results.

Twenty years ago Georgia occupied among the states of the Union a position similar to that Mexico now holds in the family of nations. A demagog with the heart of a Calles, after years of unrelenting and self-seeking agitation, had set in motion a devastating wave of anti-Catholicism which broke in a series of bigoted persecutions, culminating in the enactment of a Convent Inspection Bill, which its boastful author promised was merely a foretaste of worse.

The most copious source of the misunderstanding on which this prejudice, bigotry and hatred were based was the press of Georgia. Georgia had 160 counties, with over 200 daily and weekly newspapers. In only eleven counties were there resident priests; in all but about a half-dozen of the other 149 there was no Catholic church. In scores of counties there was not a single Catholic. Ten counties had perhaps 15,000 of the 17,000 Catholics of the state; the other 2,000 or so Catholics were distributed over 150 counties, a territory seven times the size of Massachusetts. Matter from the *Menace* and other publications of that stripe was a regular feature of many newspapers, especially in localities where Catholics were few in number or none at all. And who was to say them nay?

All the time-worn, hoary libels from the days of the Magdeburg Centuriators to those of current professional anti-Catholic calumniators were rehashed in numerous guises. There was the "Bishop's oath" and the "Jesuit's oath" and the "Knights of Columbus oath," the same vicious concoction serving for all. There were stories about priests and "nunneries" and the confessional. There would be a dozen such clippings from a single newspaper, and most of the newspapers of Georgia offended at times.

The Catholic laymen of the state suggested to their Bishop that he authorize a conference in the central city of the state to discuss the situation. They surveyed the anti-Catholic activities, of which the press of the state was but one phase.

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They subjected themselves to analysis. They found that they numbered 17,000 out of a population of 3,000,000. They were therefore outnumbered about 175 to one.

If they warned the newspapers of Georgia that Catholics numbered 20,000,000 in the United States, that they were not to be scoffed at, that they demanded their rights, or else—the newspapers could retort that if all the Catholics in Georgia stopped subscribing to and advertising in the press of the state, the slump in income would approximate ½ of 1 percent, and that the matter to which they object was for the most part published in communities where the number of Catholics was even smaller than the state average of one in every 175 persons, with the Catholic influence correspondingly weaker.

However, the Catholics of Georgia were not disheartened. Numbers were against them, but the principles of psychology and of human nature were in their favor. They knew the people of Georgia, of whom the editors were a cross-section. They knew the psychological principle that no man lies gratuitously. They were convinced that most of the editors misrepresenting the Church were doing it because of a misunderstanding of what the Church taught, or because it was the line of least resistance. They agreed with the illustrious Bishop England who proceeded on the conscious principle that the only cure for intolerance is tolerance. They felt that the only antidote for ignorance was education, and, with the authorization of their Bishop, they undertook the second step in their newspaper campaign. They determined to answer every objectionable reference to the Church appearing in the press of the state.

Their method was to write to the editor quoting the unfair reference to Catholics in his columns, and citing the facts. That was all. There was no denunciation, no calling of harsh names, no discussion of motives. The letters were never disdainful, sarcastic or funny. They assumed the editor was honest and wished to know the truth.

In most cases it was soon evident that this was not a violent assumption. After the first letter, a number of the editors wrote to the Catholic Laymen's Association saying that they were glad to have the information and indicating an intention of being more circumspect in the future. These were for the most part editors who allowed anti-Catholic matter to slip in at the insistence of subscribers. Other editors ignored the first letter; they had never received one like it before and expected that they would get no more in the future. But when they discovered that every time an objectionable reference to Catholics appeared in their columns, along came a letter of correction from the Catholic Laymen's Association, they too desisted.

Some continued to ignore them, but they continued to come, in the exact proportion of one letter of correction to every misrepresentation. Like the constant drop of water that wears away the stone, these letters, constant, patient, apparently inevitable, began to wear away the resistance of the die-hards. There was one editor, in a county in which there was not a single Catholic, who received such letters month after month, almost week after week. He never acknowledged one of the letters. He never published one. He never referred to one in his editorial columns. But his unfavorable references to the Catholic Church became more subdued and less frequent. Finally, after eighty-nine such letters had been sent to him, a favorable comment on a Catholic effort appeared in his paper. The Laymen's Association wrote him a letter of appreciation, its practise in such cases, quite as though it were the first letter it had ever directed to him. He sent a member of his editorial staff to the office of the Laymen's Association, in a city many miles away, to thank the association for the letter, to express his regret at the character of the matter which had previously appeared in his publication, and to say that there would be no reason for complaint on that ground in the future. That was several years ago. The promise has been faithfully kept.

The Georgia laymen have an even more effective method now, one for which it did not have the facilities at the beginning. As the work developed, they felt the need of a publication of their own, and established a quarterly magazine, which developed into a monthly magazine and subsequently into a Catholic newspaper for Georgia and the Southeast.

A Georgia editor, with anti-Catholic tendencies, failed to publish letters from the Laymen's Association. He lived in a city a couple of hundred miles from the offices of the Laymen's Association. The entire voting list of his county received copies of the *Bulletin* recording the editor's unsportsmanlike attitude. Strolling down the main street of the city one morning, every second person seemed to ask him if he had read the Catholic paper from Augusta. He returned to the office, dug the paper out his exchanges, and that afternoon published in his columns the correspondence he had ignored; there was no advantage in not printing it now, when it was in the hands apparently of every person in town. There was of course an attempt, ineffectual, to answer the correction of the Laymen's Association. Ripley may be interested in knowing this was the beginning of cordial relations with this editor.

One woman with an anti-Catholic complex started a series of letters to an Atlanta newspaper. They were published in the communications column, and afforded the Laymen's Asso-

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ciation an opportunity to present the Catholic position on some questions on which that position was not understood. When these letters had served their apologetic usefulness, the Laymen's Association decided that it was time to end the embryo controversy. The next answer was sent, therefore, not to the editor but to the advertising department, to be published at the regular rates. The good lady hurried around to the editorial department with her answer. The editorial department told her that the Laymen's Association had paid for its answer, and it would not be fair to it to publish hers free; they referred her to the advertising department. This threat to her pocketbook she took as a personal insult; she circularized the weekly press of the state, asserting that the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia had made it impossible for her to get her matter into the city newspapers and she was appealing to the country press to save the state and the nation from Rome. The country press, generally anti-Catholic in former days, responded with an abundance of indifference.

During the anti-Catholic effort occasioned by the 1928 national election, scores of Georgia editors directed inquiry after inquiry to the Laymen's Association on points of Catholic doctrine they felt were being misrepresented; many requested articles on Catholic subjects, particularly the contributions of Catholics in the upbuilding of the nation, on the Catholic attitude toward the republican form of government, and on the marriage laws of the Church, the latter a fertile source of prejudice because of conscious misinterpretation for political purposes. The Laymen's Association always emphasized its indifference as an organization to the political fortunes of either candidate, but stressed its concern with opposition to a candidate because of his religious convictions.

One of the leading newspapers in the Southeast, the Macon *Telegraph,* received from a reader a list of questions about the Church which it dared the *Telegraph* to answer. The *Telegraph* sent them to the Catholic Laymen's Association, which answered them. The *Telegraph* published the questions and answers in its communications columns, with an editorial commending the answers. To a reader's assertion that the Macon *News,* which had not a single Catholic on its staff, editorial, news, business or mechanical, was under the domination of Catholics, it said editorially that while it was not aware of any such Catholic domination, if the Catholics of Georgia had influence with the press of the state it was because of the reasonable, charitable, cooperative spirit of the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia. Incidentally, the Macon *News* not long ago recommended the *Bulletin* of the Catholic Laymen's Association for the Pulitzer prize because of its effective work in building up good-will in Georgia.

The work of the Laymen's Association has been done by a group of self-sacrificing men and women, who are still giving of their time, means and effort to increase further the friendly attitude of the press of Georgia toward the Church; they have decreased the occasions of letters of correction during the past two decades from as many as 100 a week to an average of two a month, with these two seldom occasioned by anything reprehensible.

The work of the Catholic Laymen's Association is by no means merely corrective; most of it is preventive by forewarning and forearming the editors. Every editor in Georgia receives the association's publication regularly, and data on Catholic matters of current interest when an occasion arises. Recently, for instance, a wave of editorial comment in favor of sterilization subsided under the oil of information poured on it by the Laymen's Association in the form of evidence of opposition to sterilization on the part of medical and other scientific authorities; many of the editors were frankly amazed to know then there was any scientific opposition to what was represented to them as a movement for the uplift of humanity which must appeal to every forward-looking person. They are also being regularly informed of the developments in Mexico, as an antidote to the flood of propaganda sweeping into their offices from official Mexican sources.

The Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia is not the only organization or group in this country doing work of this character, although it has perhaps been doing it longer and on a more extended scale than other groups. Its experience and the experience of others indicate the value of such efforts, directed not at overwhelming an adversary but of convincing him and, failing in that, of bringing the facts to his readers.

Misrepresentation of the Catholic position is not and never was confined to the press of Georgia, which now will compare favorably in that respect with the press of any other state in the Union, regardless of the difference in Catholic population. Catholics number one in every 175 in Georgia. They number one in every six in the United States. Catholics are proportionately more than twenty-five times as numerous in the nation as they are in Georgia. Can they not take some such concerted action about the patent misrepresentation of their beliefs, practises and institutions in the so-called "quality" magazines, to which THE COMMONWEAL directs its readers' attention? Magazines of the "literati" which stoop to print articles that call the Little Sisters of the Poor "panhandlers" and the Madames of the Sacred Heart "snobs," for instance. No Georgia newspaper would do that today.

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MIGHT I SUGGEST, MR. PRESIDENT?

By JAMES F. CUNNINGHAM

MY DEAR Mr. President: The NRA is gone, and with millions of my fellow citizens I am sorry. But like good Americans we must at once set to work to see if the better features of it cannot still stand. Cannot its constructive features and progressive legislation be retained? I know that there was much criticism of parts of the program launched under the National Industrial Recovery Act. Some of it was deserved, some palpably unfair. But the Supreme Court having declared the act to be unconstitutional, we bow to that decision, hoping, however, that the entire NRA program will not be lost.

In addressing you, I do so conscious of my own economic limitations. I am not an economist, though that study formed part of my undergraduate work and since then I have endeavored to apply the principles learned, first as an Impartial Labor Chairman of a large industry, later as Chairman of the Code Authority in this same industry. I have studied the NRA as a theory and have applied its principles in practise. I have learned that it works. In many cases it has been constructively helpful.

Now that you are starting over again with a new economic and social plan, might I make a few humble suggestions? The Supreme Court, of course, did not rule out the progressive legislation of the NRA or deny that advances in social engineering are necessary if we are to solve our complicated national problems. At some future time we shall bless the action of the Supreme Court for it destroyed an organization which might soon have fallen of its own weight. But the progressive elements of the structure should be retained. May I add my voice to those others which are clamoring that certain beneficent clauses of the NRA be not allowed to disappear?

By way of illustration may I cite this incident? A man in Texas was not allowed to build an ice plant. I do not know precisely why he was prevented but perhaps there were too many ice plants there already and there was not enough business to warrant another. Perhaps one more ice plant would have destroyed the whole ice business in that section. I don't know. I do know, however, this common American weakness: every one of us thinks that he is a business man. I feel that something should be done to prevent too many from going into business. If there is only room for two barber shops or two filling stations, with a decent living for those therein employed, why should four distinct organizations compete? Rugged individualism should not become stupid individualism.

I have heard it said that from a business standpoint the NRA killed the "little man." But I have watched several of these so-called "little men" as they left factories where they were making a good living to establish small shops of their own. They were not capable of running a business, they were not able to get the retail trade under fair competitive conditions, they could not pay a living wage. To compete with the already established manufacturers they had to offer the same goods at a cheaper price. In the final analysis the difference in price was paid out of the slim wages of the people employed in these factories. Pope Pius XI certainly intimates that such a man should go out of business.

Each year of our national life sees thousands of business failures. We have averaged more than 20,000 commercial and bank failures a year since 1920. Hundreds of millions of dollars are lost in this manner. While these shops and stores attempt to "carry on" they are a positive menace to legitimate business. We are told that this condition cannot be remedied, yet the NRA has put a stop to these overnight plungers in many cases and in this respect it has done the country a remarkable service. That feature should be saved.

Under the NRA Code for the Garment Industry there has been established a minimum wage for workers of all classes—a favor which the workers in many states had been unable to secure for themselves. Better wages, more healthful working conditions, shorter hours, all these have come as a result of the code. While one branch of this industry was under the code with a thirty-five-hour week, another was working its people sixty-five and seventy hours for as little as $6 or $7 a week. These men had families to support. Who will blame them for getting desperate? Where the code has been applied it has helped.

I have been told that there is no need for the NRA to watch over a minimum wage, to care for hours and conditions of employment. The state can do that. It can, but did it? As a matter of fact, in many hundreds of cases such supervision has failed though the state has not been entirely to blame.

Suppose a woman with three children to support is working in a factory. Her wage envelope contains only $12 when her working receipts show that she has earned $20. Will she complain to a state agency? We know that she will

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not. It means giving her name, place of employment and so forth. It means she must be excused from work to make the complaint. In most cases it means loss of employment and subsequent boycott in the industry when she is discovered. A "black list"? I have heard many times that there is no such thing today. But I know what I have seen. Until the NRA came, the following conditions existed. After having entered complaints before state officials, certain workers have been absolutely unable to secure work in the industry in the city and sometimes in that entire state. They were good workers too. Facing such possibilities the workers would rather be supported as in the past "partly by an unjust wage and partly by organized charity."

But under the provisions of the Code System it was possible for the Code Authority Office to check all payrolls. In cases of "underpaid" workers there was no need for complaint, the amount paid was indicated on the company payroll, the deficiency was noted and the investigator secured for the worker the back pay due. Even if there were the necessity for complaint, a check up of the bookkeeping brought to light any "close practises" so that the worker was not troubled by fear of discharge. The state may have been able to do this work in the past, but because of the difficulties involved never did get to it. Now every right-minded citizen hopes you will keep this necessary supervision in industry. It has been helpful. It need not be directly governmental; let it come from the manufacturers and the workers jointly. It protects both.

Perhaps a story will illustrate the mind of the laboring class before the coming of the NRA. It has been felt by the laboring people that the government favored the corporations at the expense of the workers' rights. The NRA gave renewed confidence in the government to great sections of that class.

One day sitting in at a hearing of an arbitration board called to settle an approaching strike, the chairman of the board had made an eloquent appeal to both sides to place the case in the hands of the board for arbitration. You know, of course, that only by appeal could he get them to do that, he could not force them. But more of that a little later. One side of the dispute agreed to place the matter in arbitration. The other side refused. Finally, the chairman, after another eloquent address to the leader of those refusing arbitration, added, "Surely, Mr. ——, you trust the Regional Labor Board to give you justice." The answer was a masterpiece of its kind. Slowly raising his eyes to look over the spectacles he wore, "Moses, Solomon and the rest," he said, "I don't trust any of them." It was not intended, Mr. President, to be irreverent, he spoke the mind of his people. They did not trust anyone but they were beginning to trust the NRA. They had great hopes in your program. Anticipated strikes were averted by arbitration. It was a reborn trust in the government which brought about the change of heart.

I know that some of the unions are jubilant over the decision of the Supreme Court. During the past two years they have had an opportunity to organize. The NRA enabled them to protect their rights from unscrupulous employers, as well as from unfair fellow workers. Now, with a strong organization behind them they will be able to talk more plainly to industry than they could even under the NRA. Most people did not realize that the NRA took away one of the strong "talking points" of unionism, "strength through organization," by which better wages, hours and conditions were to be secured. But the NRA gave those helps with none of the disadvantages of unionism.

Nevertheless, organization of the workers is an important necessity in modern social progress. Now, both groups need protection. Under the NRA amicable relations and settlement of disputed points between employer and employee have seen a new high mark. There have been many strikes it is true, but almost as many have been averted through the labor boards throughout the country. A new program should allow the workers to organize but should see to it that workers and employers may sit down and—in good-will if not in perfect harmony—discuss the causes of disagreement. The industry belongs to both classes and both should have a hand in the settling of their problems.

I have been told that the NRA put too much power in the hands of a centralized authority. Yet some such power is necessary if we are to solve one of our difficulties.

We all remember, Mr. President, when you asked that employers and employees get together and settle their differences and problems. And you asked your various labor boards, in so far as they could, to act as mediators in securing a settlement. These boards had to assume the rôle of pleaders with those involved. They had no power to enforce arbitration. I remember in one case, standing on the lecture platform for two hours. It was in San Pedro, California. I pleaded with a group of longshoremen not to strike. They did not want to strike, but in San Francisco, 450 miles away, a meeting was being held which was to determine their fate. At ten that night a telephone call informed them that a strike had been called. The longshoremen's strike cost the Pacific coast several lives and over $100,000,000. We shall face a like situation time and time again if we have not some means to enforce arbitration.

When two men get into a personal dispute they seek redress in the court of law. When two

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great classes of people differ on a question of labor why must they fight it out like aborigines of the jungle? It seems rather stupid. Is not our economic security important enough so that some means of settling strikes can be arrived at? Now we have no machinery for this work. In a new plan let provisions be made for it, even if there is need for a strong central authority to do this. "If the contending parties cannot agree," says Pius XI, "let public authority intervene."

I chanced across an article just a few days ago used to illustrate the menace of the NRA. As I remember the case, a woman was ordered by her physician to rest for an extra half-hour after lunch. Apparently this was a violation of code regulations, so her employer wrote to Washington. The answer was that she could not rest the extra half hour. Common sense would have solved the problem for most employers, but common sense seems to become daily more uncommon.

I don't know about this case, Mr. President, but I can tell you from personal knowledge of hundreds and hundreds of women who used to pay $.30 a day carfare to and from work. They would come into the factory bright and early but there was no work, so they would wait the long day through. They had been called; they were afraid to go home in numbers of cases. At the end of the day it was no rare thing to find that some of them had earned $.70. This leaves a $.40 profit for the day if they had to buy no food.

That was before the code. When the employer found that under the code he had to pay a minimum wage for the time spent in the factory instead of the actual time of operation, he was just a little more careful in calling twenty girls when he had work for only ten. Then the ten worked two full days or three, as the case might be, and the other ten took their share of the work, share and share alike, but no longer the hours of waiting for a single dress to sew. It is better to work two days, full time, for $4 or $5 a week when business is slow, than to waste time around a factory for five or six days and get the same amount at the end of the week. Don't let this condition of pre-code difficulties return.

If I were an employer I should feel it an obligation to bless the NRA. It attempted and succeeded very often in abolishing unfair trade practises, exorbitant discounts, shipping on consignment and like "chiseling."

Not so long ago a manufacturer told me he had saved $10,000 in a single year since the coming of the NRA code because of the stabilized discount rates. Before the code competitors would offer very unfair discounts which could no longer be subtracted from the overhead but had to come out of the workers. He was able, he told me, to pay a fair wage according to code standards and still make more money than any year since 1928. The NRA was the salvation of his business. I have seen several business houses save in the same manner.

Mr. President, millions of us wish to thank you for the National Industrial Recovery Act. The people to whom you gave a new hope, the mass of the people in industry are grateful. The men and women, thousands of them with whom I have worked, never want conditions again as they were before the advent of the NRA.

There is no question that the codes worked difficulties in individual cases. What law does not? As a priest, hardly a week passes that I do not see the disadvantage of some of our Catholic marriage laws. It seems that this particular husband or wife would be much better separated from the other party or married to someone else. Yet God made marriage indissoluble. The law cannot be set aside though it does work hardship sometime. If the law of God sometimes "pinches" the individual, we must not expect man-made law to be entirely free from hardship.

Now that the NRA has been declared unconstitutional we feel that it was nevertheless a step in the right direction. A mistake has been made but a happy mistake. It has taught us something and we know better what is worth while and what is impracticable. We are ready to start again. The steps you have taken were a source of material salvation to many people. With the experience gained, you yourself will be better able to draft a new program, blaze a new trail, carry the torch of social engineering far ahead of your fellow men.

The United States of America is still pioneering. As we go ahead, a Supreme Court will protect our individual and state rights. To you, Mr. President, we look for leadership along the constructive lines of the past. Don't doubt our loyalty and our willingness to follow you, Mr. President. Start again. As you lead the way, we are here, the rank and file of the country, solidly behind you, asking you to guide us with the same ability, the same initiative, the same zeal for our welfare you have always shown.

Reaper

Paint me a woman in a field of wheat
Yellow and full against the shining heat

Of afternoon. But do not let her bind
The lovely sheaves, having within her mind

A care of winter. Let her stand and glean
With quiet eyes, unthinking and serene,

The sky, the earth, the color and the sun,
To feed her soul long after summer's done.

OLGA MARX.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—The Holy Father has named Cardinal Hayes of New York as Papal Legate to the Seventh National Eucharistic Congress to be held at Cleveland, Ohio, September 23 to 26. * * * The Public Course in Apologetics for Laymen at the Gregorian University, Vatican City, has concluded its seventeenth year, with 1,000 men—business and professional men, government officials and university students—in attendance. Lectures this year dealt with the existence of God and free will, and an opportunity was provided to present written objections or difficulties. Members of the course also participated in a day of recollection on the last Sunday of each month. * * * Bishop Walsh of Charleston recently dedicated a new church for a South Carolina colored congregation which was discovered by a priest a few years ago. This congregation although unattended by a priest for thirty years were still baptizing and instructing their children, praying in common, saying the rosary and singing Catholic hymns. At the close of an annual retreat for diocesan priests, Cardinal Mundelein of Chicago exhorted the clergy and laity of his diocese to increase their efforts for the colored and spoke of a new high school and hospital that he is planning for them. * * * The *British Weekly* records that between 1904 and 1935 Catholic churches in greater London have increased from 156 to 247, the greatest increase of any of the specified Christian bodies. * * * The state of Florida has repealed its Convent Inspection Act passed in 1917; Alabama had taken similar action last February. * * * At its annual meeting the French Confederation of Christian Workers disclosed that the number of affiliated unions had grown from 792 to 825 this year. * * * A three-day convention of the Sacred Heart Province of the Third Order of St. Francis will be held at Chicago, July 9-11. "Saint Francis or Communism" will be the convention keynote. * * * "Catholic Motor Missions" for non-Catholics are being given this summer in the Archdiocese of St. Louis and the Diocese of St. Joseph, Missouri, by the Vincentian Fathers.

The Nation.—Acting in what was characterized as "open revolt," the House of Representatives rejected the "death sentence" provision in the Wheeler-Rayburn utility holding company bill by a majority of 216 to 146. This provision had been endorsed in the Senate by a margin of one vote. The President's request for a reversal was denied. The House also voted for an amendment prohibiting utility companies from donating to campaign funds. * * * Speaker Byrns declared that new tax legislation, as requested by the President, could not be enacted by Congress in less than two months. That would doom Congress to plenty of baths and ice water during the worst that Washington has to offer—unless the White House again changes its mind. * * * Mr. Roosevelt asked Congress to enact a law to "terminate any consent which the United States may have voluntarily given to be sued on its securities, coins or currencies." This legislation would prevent suits on the basis of the Supreme Court ruling (in the gold cases) that the government would be liable for damages if a bondholder could prove actual loss through abrogation of the gold clause. * * * General Hugh S. Johnson began work as supervisor of work relief in New York City. He is to be responsible for the expenditure of $78,657,310 allotted for projects already approved by Washington. The General declared that this money would not do much to remedy unemployment, but might well stimulate industry and therewith affect the labor market favorably. * * * Father Charles E. Coughlin moved a step farther in his efforts to organize a national union of automotive workers. The membership was to profit, he held, from higher prices charged the public for automobiles in order to raise the wage level for the industry above $2,000. * * * "Father" Divine, the Negro evangelist of Harlem, formally entered politics on July 1. But registration officials refused to register the faithful under their "kingdom" names and also insisted upon the literacy test. "Father" Divine thereupon announced that he was looking for a "revealed" way out. * * * F. Russell Bichowsky, formerly superintendent of the physical chemistry division of the Naval Research Laboratory, declared in a book—"Is the Navy Ready?"—that the United States navy was way below par. He asserted that gunnery was poor, that many new ships were already obsolete, and that officers were badly trained.

The Wide World.—Returning from a European journey which revealed general dissatisfaction with the latest achievements of British diplomacy, Sir Anthony Eden declared that he and M. Laval had discussed "what should be done next, now that what has been done has been done." Italy was still more recalcitrant than France. Mussolini threatened to walk out of the League if his desires in Ethiopia were thwarted, and certain apparently inspired press dispatches indicated that some kind of agreement concerning Austria had been reached with the German government. Clearly the good results of Stresa had been lost in a new downpour of suspicion and intrigue. Meanwhile Hitlerites took heart, and there was some talk in Berlin papers about the chance of an Anglo-German accord on the general European situation. In England, however, a poll indicated that an overwhelming majority of voters favored the League of Nations and general reduction of armaments. * * * The Chinese rout continued. Japan demanded that elements hostile to it be removed from the Chahar province also, and these demands were met. A mutinous and dispirited Chinese army began to break up into groups of "loyalists" and "rebels." At Tientsin, international troops were held in readiness for an emergency. * * * In honor of the anniversary of June 30, a number of important announcements were made in Germany. A proclamation by Hitler

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conferred on Minister of Cultural Affairs Rust full power to deal with the existing religious controversies. Dr. Goebbels delivered a tirade against the Jews. Helping to celebrate the "summer solstice" on Hesselberg Mountain, General Goering said: "Let no one object if we prefer to stream together here in the unity of our people to lift up our hearts to the idea of our Fuehrer rather than listen to the chatter of quarreling clerics." * * * The organization committee of the "Popular Front," which unites most of France's Left-wing groups, issued an appeal for nation-wide demonstrations against Fascism on Bastille Day, July 14. This was added evidence for the growth of sentiment favoring reaction to the Right. * * * Further evidence was offered for the progress of stabilization and moderation in Mexico. The press reported that President Cárdenas was planning to offer general amnesty to political exiles and other "enemies of the state." This would mean the return of Archbishop Ruiz y Flores, Apostolic Delegate, to his country.

* * * *

The Third Party.—At Camp Tantiment, Pennsylvania, clear words were spoken in favor of a third party for the United States. Louis Waldman, New York State chairman of the Socialist party (a Right-wing Socialist), was the first to call for one, saying, "The road remains and will remain the road of democracy, with the development of new economic forms from the basis of an enlarged constructive Federalism, to be achieved by such amendments of the Constitution as may be necessary. . . . Neither of the two old parties is able to accomplish it. . . . It would be futile, however, to offer to them a labor party without labor. It is up to the American Federation of Labor to take the lead in this party." A few days later, Thomas R. Amlie of Wisconsin, leader of the progressive congressional group sponsoring the Chicago Farmer-Labor meeting of July 5 and 6, told the same audience that the New Deal has proved the impossibility of "enlightened capitalism." While warning away believers in direct action by a minority (Communists), he declared for an out-and-out collectivist platform. "Steps ought to be taken without delay to effect a federation of all those groups that are committed to the democratic process as a means of effecting this change, such as Farmer-Laborites, farmers' unions, farm holiday associations, technocrats, veterans of industry, the various radical groups within the Christian and Jewish faiths." Writing of the proposed party, Norman Thomas, leader of the Socialists, said: "It must be Farmer-Labor in basis and outlook. It must recognize that the essential conflict is not the little man against the big but workers with hand and brain against the exploitation by an owning class. The party we want must be avowedly anti-capitalist and pro-cooperative commonwealth; it must reject the potential Fascism of Long or Coughlin or their aides."

For American Youth.—On June 26, President Roosevelt set aside from funds for work relief a sum of $50,000,000 for vocational and educational facilities for more than 500,000 young Americans whose normal opportunities for development are seriously threatened by the depression. Mr. Roosevelt has set up a National Youth Administration to prepare and put into operation a unified program coordinating school and employment for those between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five. The actual work is to be decentralized, being handled by local organizations who will provide the assistance in securing employment, the job training in industrial and professional fields, the material aid to high school and college students and the work relief which comprise the main points of the program. Job training for 150,000, high school aid for 100,000, and college student aid for 120,000 are anticipated. Assistant Federal Relief Administrator Aubrey Williams, who was appointed as supervisor of the new program, said he expected it would be "in full swing" by the middle of July. At the National Catholic School for Social Service in Washington, D. C., an institute for persons interested in the youth movement for young women will be held July 15-27. Educational Values, Extension Courses, Vocational Courses, Study Clubs, Vocational Guidance, Employment, and Leisure Time Activities are among the topics to be discussed. This year's national convention of the National Council of Catholic Women will devote a major portion of its program to the problems that face the youth of the land today.

French Academy Tercentenary.—Wearing their picturesque green-embroidered uniforms, almost the entire French Academy attended the opening of the festivities commemorating the Academy's three hundredth anniversary, June 17. Cardinal Verdier of Paris presided at the ceremonies, which were held at the chapel of the Sorbonne where Cardinal Richelieu, founder of the Academy, lies buried; Monsignor Maglione, the apostolic nuncio, represented the Holy Father; Canon Sudour of Saint-Etienne du Mont was the celebrant of the Mass. Monsignor Baudrillart of the Institut Catholique delivered a discourse praising Cardinal Richelieu and urging the Academy to defend "the family, the fatherland, religion, the whole tradition," which he said were more seriously threatened today than at the time of the French Revolution or of the Great War. The main aim of the French Academy has been to maintain and develop the purity of the French language. It has published several editions of a dictionary of good usage according to the best writers and the élite of polite society. It pays a small salary to its forty members, each of whom is elected for life in recognition of his eminence in literature, history, philosophy or other fields. The French Academy also awards a number of prizes each year for notable literary and historical achievements. The "Prix de Vertu," established in 1784 to signalize outstanding acts of charity or courage, has often been awarded to heroic priests and nuns. The Academy's endowment, which was established toward the end of the eighteenth century, may be materially increased in the very near future by its share in a contested legacy of 500,000,000 francs from John Jaffe, a British philanthropist who died at Nice.

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Neighborship and Cooperation.—Alexander Troyanovsky, Soviet Ambassador to the United States, spent a few days in Chicago voicing as amiable sentiments as any native Midwestern politician could proclaim. Claiming that the present Russian government "was formed merely to defend the country from enemies, internal and abroad," he said that since the Soviet is now peaceful, the administration is growing really democratic. There are equal rights for all voters, although "I won't conceal the fact that there are still some who cannot vote." The next day Ambassador Troyanovsky said: "Against all international hatreds, animosities and rivalries we wish to raise as high as possible our banner of supreme friendship, neighborship and cooperation among nations." Expressing the extreme "Stalinist" view of "Socialism in one country" as against the Trotzkyist belief in the necessity for world revolution, he asserted: "We like to cherish the dream of a world of free states, each preserving its own structure, habits and culture, but all linked together in cooperation for all peaceful development. Within our own limitations we have tried to provide a model, just as you in America have given an example in your own states." In Russia the reorganization of the League of Communist Youth, withdrawing it from the industrial and agricultural work it has carried on exactly like the party, and concentrating it upon education and culture and the propagation of "the ideals of the party among young people," can be interpreted in several ways. It was ostensibly done because with its past accomplishments Russia can now breathe more freely and work more on the "superstructure" of civilization. But it is also said the Communist youth is tainted with Trotzkyism and resents any hint of bourgeois action in the government and is difficult to keep lined up behind the present leadership of the government.

Catholics in Public Schools.—White Plains, New York, is carrying out a new experiment in caring for Catholic students in public high schools. During the past two years, Newman Clubs have been organized throughout the city, and now have a membership of 700 boys and girls drawn from five senior and junior high schools. The clubs function as parish units, afford a systematic instruction in the essentials of the Catholic faith, and issue a joint quarterly. This year special baccalaureate exercises were held in St. John's Church for the 150 Catholic graduates of the year. City and school officials attended the exercises, which consisted in the main of Benediction, an address by the Reverend Ignatius Cox, S. J., and appropriate music. The pastors report that their efforts have been generously supported by the educational authorities.

* * * *

Housing Progress.—On June 29, the largest P.W.A. housing project in the East was finished in the Bronx, New York City. It was built with the aid of a $5,000,000 loan and space in it will rent for $11 per room. This is not a substitute for slums because rents for the cheapest type dwelling must not exceed $7 per room. Hillside, this new development, covers fourteen acres, five of which have 108 four-story buildings and four six-story elevator apartments. The rest of the space is devoted to gardens, parks, playgrounds, terraces and wading pools. There is room for 1,416 families. In Kansas an 800-acre tract of garden homes is well under way. Four-room houses, built by the owners for wages paid by the corporation running the project, will each have seven or eight acres attached. There will be a 200-acre common pasture. The tracts, completed, will cost from $2,200 to $2,500, and residents will have from twelve to fifteen years to pay up. Regular workers from nearby Dodge City, and tenant wheat farmers will form the bulk of the population. Langdon Post, Tenement House Commissioner of New York City, spoke in Pennsylvania against the policy of treating the housing problem as an emergency and relief problem. "The most important thing is to make housing a major political issue. . . . The people must be taught to realize that government responsibility for housing must be placed on a par with government responsibility for education." Also in Pennsylvania, Rexford G. Tugwell called together the nation's experts in social planning to help him work out the $500,000,000 resettlement program he has been chosen by the President to head. "A community does not consist of houses alone. There is something else to a community besides that. We are trying to find out what it is and how we can bring it into being—to make it come alive."

Flying Wheat Fields.—The prevention of dust storms and erosion held a leading position on the docket of the recent Minneapolis meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Doctor Isaiah Bowman, noted geographer and scientist, told the conference that the climatological records in Washington contained data more valuable "than all the gold in the Klondike." He deplored the neglect of this source of information and the insufficiency of appropriations, which was an obstacle to more comprehensive analyses of the drought, erosion, dust-storm problem. Dr. Bowman was confident that much could be done to lessen the effects of the drought and reduce the rate of erosion. "The immediate land problem of the West is not where to place a proposed 'shelter belt' but where to turn farm land back to range land. Climatological studies will provide one of the main sources of information on which to base a land retirement policy. . . . The work of restoration of the grass cover should be focused in those areas where farmers have overextended agriculture. . . . It is said that Kansas is the only state in the Union that contains more trees now than it did before it was settled." At a later session Homer J. Henney of Kansas State College declared that weather reports on the rain of the previous year from July to December could be analyzed to tell the farmer how much of a crop he could expect from his sowing of one to two months later. He believed that the water stored in the ground thanks to these rains made possible these fairly accurate forecasts, the result of fifteen years of study. Units of from four to six counties were used to make the state forecast.

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Communications

THE LAY FACULTY

Winooski Park, Vt.

TO the Editor: One probably needs a sense of humor when one is bold enough to enter the lists of journalistic controversy; but I have discovered recently that one must use this sense very sparingly and with "scholarly" footnotes. For example, in the recent discussion of the status of the lay professor in the Catholic college, which has been appearing in THE COMMONWEAL since April 12, I made the supposedly innocent (I dare not now call it even slyly humorous!) remark that, when we teachers get an adequate salary, "half of the poetry and most of the pity will be taken out of our traditional lot." Thereupon, Dr. Theodore Maynard, in the issue of May 17, taking up his brilliant sword in behalf of a "via media," accuses me of being a "trifle smug." God knows—maybe I am! I never intended, however, to have any reader (least of all a fellow teacher) gather the unfortunate impression that I feel complacent on the vexing problem of underpaid professors. I do think, nevertheless, that we cannot consistently continue to pride ourselves on our sacrifice and service to the cause of Catholic education and at the same time expect to receive the salaries of Harvard professors. Most of us doubtless prefer to serve the cause under less intimately annoying conditions, with less "poetry," and much less poverty, but offhand I should not suspect that a man of Dr. Maynard's distinguished talents as a poet could possibly overlook the "poetry" of our "traditional lot." Nor was it possible to conceive of even a professor (especially one with Dr. Maynard's fine sense of humor) mistaking my reference to the "poetry" of professorial poverty as anything but a rather feeble attempt to inject some sly humor into a serious academic argument.

Naturally, however, since Dr. Maynard had already thought me guilty of "holy horror," he rather expected me to be smug. Again, please let me say emphatically that horror, holy or unholy, was far from my mind when I read Mr. Stames's article. It is true that I did write: "Questions and answers such as Mr. Stames proposes may seem embarrasing if not positively heretical, because they strike at the heart of the entire problem of Catholic Action." But it was Mr. Stames himself who suggested first that his criticisms of the lay professor's position might be interpreted as heretical. I quote Mr. Stames: "These remarks are not intended to be heretical." Now, if Dr. Maynard will please note, I said, "may seem embarrassing if not positively heretical," and I still mean just that, because, as apparently both Mr. Stames and I are aware (and Dr. Maynard also must be), critics of clerical practises have been suspected of "heresy" for less caustic remarks than those of Mr. Stames. Anyway, my emphasis was on the word "embarrassing." I still maintain that if Mr. Stames's contention that priests and laymen cannot really cooperate in the work of Catholic education be correct, then all this talk about Catholic Action is futile and "richly absurd." I agree with Dr. Maynard that Catholic Action is "definitely helped by frank discussion" of this vital question; if I did not, I should never have entered the "lists" in the first place. In fact, I was secretly pleased that Mr. Stames was himself so frank in laying bare certain unfortunate conditions in the relationship between lay professors and their clerical associates. And Dr. Maynard was nothing if not commendably frank throughout his excellent article.

Finally, Dr. Maynard accuses both Mr. Stames and me of failing to point out that "Catholic education is at a crisis." It seems to me that we had business enough on hand in discussing one phase of the "crisis" without starting more "trouble" about the qualities of the Ph. D.'s possessed by professors, lay or clerical, in our Catholic colleges. I have met Ph. D.'s both in our own colleges and in non-Catholic universities who, however valuable the quality of their doctoral degrees, did not know how to teach, or else did not deign to impart the fruits of their scholarship. In fact, I was fortunate enough to have studied for a short time under Dr. Maynard himself before he held the well-deserved title of Doctor, and I can assure him that the quality of his scholarship was even then unimpeachable and, in the best sense of a much-abused word, inspiring.

JEREMIAH K. DURICK.

A FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Ann Arbor, Mich.

TO the Editor: The Reverend R. J. Henle, S. J., in a letter printed in your issue of June 14, says that he thinks he knows "one or two such men in some or other of our larger universities" as may properly train the leaders he desires for American Catholics, and with more assurance records that "every year there are some freshmen hungry for just this sort of thing." Even if one suspects that this survey has a color a shade brighter than severe statistics would confirm, it justifies much optimism, and clearly obviates the necessity of the plan Father Henle wrote to propose. For if one such professor and one such student exist, we both have and will have a leader. Father Henle's plan is directed to arranging that they meet, and I am writing to say that at present it is advisable to keep them, in general, apart.

Separated they may create two followings; together they would have to share one. And what we really need is not nearly so much a trained leader as a trained following. Any man capable of leading is capable of discovering the means to equipment for leadership, and no one can lead who does not know how following is done. What is most certain is that to lead is to lead somebody, some body; and today in America I imagine a Catholic of the leading sort would be bewildered by the effort of finding any Catholic body which he might lead. The Catholics who had been educated at college would generally be as little adapted to his appeal as the rest. This is the problem. It is the function of the colleges to create a following, an audience for the leader to address. This is a more difficult work than creating leaders; and the historical evidence is that it makes better leaders.

CRAIG LA DRIÈRE.

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Books

Sympathy

Young Joseph, by Thomas Mann; translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

"A MONUMENTAL novel," the publisher calls "Joseph and His Brothers." However apt the phrase, it might be more truly applied to the present volume, the second book in Thomas Mann's projected trilogy about Jacob's twelve sons. True, the first book reaches great heights of power in the description of the wedding night of Jacob and Leah, and in the pathetic story of Rachel's death. But "Young Joseph," its sequel, has an effectiveness of its own. A reader will long remember, for instance, the scene at the well when the handsome, lovable, conceited, tale-bearing Joseph suddenly became a man. It took much cruel punishment to mature him, but he learned his lesson thoroughly. Not one word did he utter as his brothers bargained him into slavery; he could keep a secret at last. One would find it difficult to match this scene for its intensity—the fury of the brothers, Reuben's conflict, Joseph's sudden, terrified glimpse of justice and reality, the sale and its bitter aftermath for the brothers, plagued by Jacob's mourning and their own consciousness of guilt. It is on this note that "Young Joseph" ends, with the reader eagerly looking forward to the concluding volume.

This episode is but one of the many dramatic incidents in the book. One recalls some of the others: the charming pictures of the two brothers as little Benjamin marveled at Joseph's account of the wonderful dreams; Jacob's sad foreboding as he said goodby to the favorite son whom he could not punish. Greater than any individual scene, though, is the richness of the narrative itself, the sympathetic understanding which fills out the scant details of the biblical story, illuminating what was dark. Mann's imagination sees the coat of many colors as the wedding garment worn by Leah and then by Rachel and coveted accordingly by all the brothers as the mark of the blessing. When Joseph beguiled his father into giving it to him, the ten were furious; when, swaggering, he wore it on his mission of peace to them at the well, they fell upon him and tore the *ketonet* to rags. Only when "the true son of the true wife" had been stripped naked was their hate in some measure assuaged; only then did Joseph understand what he had done to them.

Pervading the whole spirit of the book is this sympathy which visualizes these people of long ago and reconstructs the color, richness and feeling of their lives. With keen insight, Thomas Mann successfully vivifies the past; somehow, indeed, it does not seem to be the past. With a curious softening and blending of historical distances, of the shades and layers of time between the first men and the patriarchs, between them and us, Mann suggests that after all we are nearer to these people than they are to the ancestors with whom they sometimes identify themselves. (Readers of "The Magic Mountain" will feel no surprise at this contraction and expansion of formal time.) Time, to Mann, is of little account; only life is

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important. It is with the stuff of life that he deals as he probes motives, analyzes moods, portrays emotions. So skilful, vivid, real and true is the delineation that the reader is deeply stirred as he faces not past and present but life itself.

Enthusiasm hardens into the conviction that the completion of this trilogy of Joseph and his brothers will give us Mann's best work. Even the soberest judgment will admit that the series will undoubtedly be worthy of standing beside "The Buddenbrooks" and "The Magic Mountain." To those who know Mann there is no need to say more.

MARY STACK.

Dinosaurs and Others

Before the Dawn of History, by Charles R. Knight. New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Publishing. $2.50.

FOR more than thirty years Charles Knight has been an undisputed leader in the field of graphic reconstrucion of the animals that inhabited this earth in past geologic ages and of the environment in which they lived. To his chosen field of endeavor Mr. Knight has brought not only fine artistic ability but also a mind schooled in the discipline of morphological studies and a keen appreciation of the peculiar demands of his subject. His paintings grace the leading paleontological museums in this country—the American Museum of Natural History, the Los Angeles Museum, the Field Colombian Museum—and copies of them are to be found in museums all over the world.

In "Before the Dawn of History" Mr. Knight presents a selected collection of his works. It is intended to represent in outline the history of life on our planet down to the beginning of historic times, but it is more than just that—it is a paleogeography as well, a history of physiography and climate and ecology. Here may be seen, where now Chicago is, coral reefs bathed by the waters of a sub-tropical Silurian shore. A Cretaceous sea, where are now only the chalk beds of western Kansas, abounds with ichthyosaurs, turtles ten feet long, and the fierce mosasaurs, genuine sea-serpents of incredible size. A semi-tropical lagoon is the "ancestor" of the lithographic slate quarries of Solenhofen; on its shores caper the slimly built ancestors of the later gigantic and bizarre dinosaurs, and above its waters fly birds with reptile-like tails and reptiles with bat-like wings. The lovely valley of the Ohio is here too—a dank Carboniferous swamp forest, about whose stagnant pools crawl huge, sluggish, salamander-like creatures, the first things with backbones to dwell on the dry land. Here also are the subtropical forests that were our western plains 4,000,000 years ago, peopled by four-toed horses, and their distant cousins, the huge, clumsy, thick-skinned, many-horned uintatheres. Here also the snow-covered wastes of the Ice Age, home of the woolly rhino and the hairy mammoth—and of primitive man.

On the whole, the collection is well chosen. The Blue-Green Algae Pool loses much in effect when reproduced

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without color (the forty-odd illustrations are all in sepia half-tone); it is included, I suppose, chiefly to lend continuity and completeness to the picture of developing life on our earth. There are a few of his well-known things that one looks for but does not find—something like his lively action picture of an ichthyosaur family group might well have been included.

There is a text also, a text which concerns itself with a rather detailed exposition of the methods used in making reconstructions of extinct animals, a quite sketchy and entirely too dogmatic account of prehistoric man, and running comments on the illustrations. Unfortunately Mr. Knight's pen is hardly as facile as his brush, but what he has to say is adequate. The book should have a popular appeal for people of all classes and of all ages.

WILLIAM L. ENGELS.

A Misunderstood Sovereign

Tsar of Freedom, The Life and Reign of Alexander II, by Stephen Graham. New Haven: Yale University Press. $3.50.

AFTER Mr. Graham's brilliant and accurate biographies of Ivan the Terrible and Boris Godunoff, I was much disappointed to find his life of Alexander II filled with gross and unexplainable mistakes, not in appreciations and judgments to which every biographer is entitled, but in facts. For instance, Mr. Graham dates the birth of Nicholas II in 1874, while in reality it occurred in 1868, and the death of Alexander II's eldest son in 1870, instead of 1865, and asserts that the former was Military Governor of St. Petersburg at the time of the breaking out of the Crimean War, a position which he never occupied. In addition, there is in the entire book a confusion of personalities, and there are also some curious omissions. Then again, his statement that the Tsar intended to push aside his eldest son who later became Alexander III, and substitute as heir the boy given him by his mistress, the Princess Dolgorouky, whom he married after the Empress's death, is monstrous. In general the sources which Mr. Graham relies on are very much open to suspicion. The volume by Maurice Paléologue concerning the romance of Alexander II with Catherine Dolgorouky is anything but exact and contains some fantastic statements, while the works of Julius Eckardt from which we find long extracts have always been considered unworthy of any credence.

One last remark concerning something which is extremely puzzling: The frontispiece is a portrait of Alexander II wearing a uniform which did not exist at the time, but which was introduced in the Russian army by Alexander III several years after his father's assassination.

Apart from these criticisms, there is undoubtedly much that is interesting in this biography of a misunderstood sovereign, and the description of his inner struggles whilst he was trying to overcome the opposition of the Russian nobility to the emancipation of the peasants, and later on to stop the wave of Slavophil enthusiasm which culminated in war with Turkey in 1877-1878, is very well done.

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Briefer Mention

A Layman's View of History, by Henry Osborn Taylor. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

THE ESSAYS in this book express ideas and a mood a man can hold only by virtue of passing many years thoughtfully. One essay is called "Old Age," one, "The Wisdom of the Ages," another, "Sub Specie Aeternitatis," and two are written about Henry Adams, who temperamentally was always at least three or four generations aged. The fruitful maturity of the book is not derived simply from the author's years. Henry Osborn Taylor has been a student of history all his life, and has always known the subject as a positive humanistic philosophy which adds to experience by the years it covers. It helps to complete experience by exhibiting "the oneness between the present and the past," and "the pervasive unity of human life through its divers manifestations." After studying law and writing a book about it, Mr. Taylor spent ten years writing "Ancient Ideals." He continued his studies four years and then published "The Classical Heritage of the Middle Ages," and spent the next ten years on his most famous book, "The Mediaeval Mind." Since then he has published six more works. Now, as the fruit of his life's study, he affirms in an impressive manner the existence of the human element in man and the divine element of the world, but he goes no further than the affirmation. He seems to have taken a good road after great consideration, but proceeds only to the border of the fields it directly leads to. He refrains, and at times it appears with difficulty, from permitting his course of thought to run through.

The Vortex (La Voragine), by Jose Eustasio Rivera; translated by Earle K. James. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.50.

THIS is an excellent English version from the ninth Spanish edition of this modern classic of tropical South America around the headwaters of the Amazon. Starting in Bogota, the narrator and the girl he has betrayed begin a pilgrimage through the cattle country to the rubber jungles. About everything imaginable and a good deal that would be beyond the imagination of a person from a cooler clime and without the unpredictable element in Spanish character, happens to them. Descriptions of the brutalities in the slave-worked rubber forests are gruesome, and the novel has had a great social effect in ameliorating the modern practises of peonage. For this reason it is called the "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of South America.

CONTRIBUTORS

E. R. PINEDA, a critic of books on Hispanic culture and a lecturer on Spanish-American topics, is now an instructor in Romance languages at Columbia University.

RICHARD REID is secretary of the Catholic Laymen's Association of Georgia and editor of the *Bulletin*

REV. JAMES F. CUNNINGHAM, C.S.P., is stationed at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, New York City.

OLGA MARX is a North Carolina poet.

MARY STACK is an instructor in English at Brooklyn College and St. Joseph's College for Women, Brooklyn, N. Y.

WILLIAM L. ENGELS is a fellow in the department of zoology of the University of California.

PRINCESS CATHERINE RADZIWILL of Russia is an author whose latest book is "The Empress Frederick." Her autobiography is entitled "It Really Happened."

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